

What is claimed is:

SUB A(7)

1. A method for real-time distillation of a source document, comprising:
 - 2 receiving search criteria from a client;
 - 3 searching a plurality of sources based on the search criteria;
 - 4 determining search results responsive to said searching;
 - 5 distilling the search results in accordance with one or more data types,
 - 6 each data type comprising a data type constraint;
 - 7 identifying one or more data type constraints for each search result;
 - 8 finding the data type constraint in the context of each search result, the
 - 9 context having the data type constraint and text surrounding the
 - 10 data type constraint; and
 - 11 creating a distilled result having the context.
- 1 2. A method as in claim 1, wherein the amount of text surrounding the data
2 type constraint is defined by a user.
- 1 3. A method for real-time distillation of a source document, comprising:
 - 2 receiving search criteria from a client;
 - 3 searching a plurality of sources based on the search criteria;
 - 4 determining search results responsive to said searching;
 - 5 distilling the search results by identifying one or more key sentences for
 - 6 each search result;
 - 7 finding the key sentence in the context of each source, the key sentence
 - 8 context having the key sentence and text surrounding the key
 - 9 sentence; and
 - 10 creating a distilled result having the key sentence context.
- 1 4. A method as in claim 1, wherein the amount of text surrounding the key
2 sentence is defined by a user.

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1 5. A method for real-time distillation of a source document, comprising:
2 contacting a search server;
3 submitting search criteria to the search server;
4 receiving search results responsive to said submitting;
5 distilling the search results by finding one or more key sentences for each
6 search result;
7 finding the key sentence in the context of each source, the key sentence
8 context having the key sentence and text surrounding the key
9 sentence; and
10 creating a distilled result having the key sentence context.

1 6. A method for displaying search results, comprising:
2 receiving search criteria from a client;
3 searching a plurality of sources based on the search criteria;
4 determining search results responsive to said searching, the search
5 results comprising source documents;
6 distilling the source documents into one or more result objects, each of the
7 result objects corresponding to one of the source documents; and
8 for each result object, creating an index from the result object into its
9 corresponding source document.

1 7. A method as in claim 6, wherein said creating an index for a given result
2 object comprises:
3 finding the portion of the corresponding source document matching a
4 given result object; and
5 creating a path to the portion of the corresponding source document.

1 8. A method as in claim 7, wherein the portion of the corresponding source
2 document is determined by the user.

1 9. A method as in claim 7, wherein the path comprises a hyperlink.

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- 1 10. A method for displaying search results, comprising:
 - 2 receiving search criteria from a client;
 - 3 searching a plurality of sources based on the search criteria;
 - 4 determining search results responsive to said searching;
 - 5 distilling the search results;
 - 6 creating a mid-menu by:
 - 7 generating one or more result categories, each result category
 - 8 having a number of results; and
 - 9 determining a content metric of each result category, the content
 - 10 metric being a measure of the value of the result category;
 - 11 and
 - 12 displaying the mid-menu.
- 1 11. A method as in claim 10, wherein the determining of the content metric
 - 2 comprises determining a quantitative measure for each result type.
- 1 12. A method as in claim 11, wherein the quantitative measure comprises the
 - 2 number of results for each result category.
- 1 13. A method as in claim 11, wherein the quantitative measure comprises the
 - 2 number of occurrences of pre-specified data.
- 1 14. A method as in claim 10, wherein the determining of the content metric
 - 2 comprises determining a qualitative measure for each result category.
- 1 15. A method as in claim 14, wherein the qualitative measure comprises a
 - 2 determining the relevance of the results of the result category to the
 - 3 search criteria.
- 1 16. A method as in claim 10, wherein at least one of the result categories
 - 2 comprises a data type.

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- 1 17. A method as in claim 10, wherein at least one of the result categories
2 comprises a user-defined type.
- 1 18. A method as in claim 10, additionally comprising determining user
2 preferences, and dynamically creating the mid-menu in accordance with
3 the user preferences.
- 1 19. A method for displaying search results, comprising:
2 receiving search criteria from a client;
3 searching a plurality of sources based on the search criteria;
4 determining search results responsive to said searching;
5 distilling the search results;
6 determining user preferences;
7 creating a mid-menu in accordance with the user preferences by
8 dynamically generating one or more result categories, each result
9 category having a number of results; and
10 determining a content metric associated with each result category,
11 the content metric being a measure of the value of the result
12 category; and
13 displaying the mid-menu.
- 1 20. A method as in claim 19, wherein the determining of the content metric
2 comprises determining a quantitative measure for each result type.
- 1 21. A method as in claim 19, wherein the determining of the content metric
2 comprises determining a qualitative measure for each result category.

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